

## GENOCIDE

### Anti-Semitism-traditional, Religious, and Racial

#### Objectives:

- ❖ Students will identify some pre-Nazi Holocaust sources of anti-Semitism
- ❖ Students will explain the traditional (religious) and racial aspects of anti-Semitism

Using Handout A-1, "time-Line of Major Jewish Experiences in Europe," draw several conclusions regarding the nature and extent of anti-Jewish sentiment and actions.

Summarize the major episodes for each century listed and develop a definition for the term anti-Semitism.

#### Handout A-2 focuses on the background of the "Jewish Life in Poland."

- ❖ Speculate as to why so many Jews could be found living in Poland
- ❖ Use the reading to find evidence to support or modify your response
- ❖ Refer to A-1 and compare the information included on the time-line with that observed from the reading A-2

#### Respond:

- ❖ What distinguished the Jews from the Christian Polish population?
- ❖ How might these differences between Polish Jews and Polish Christians lead to disagreements between the two groups?
- ❖ Why were the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries called the "Golden Age of Polish Jewry"?
- ❖ How did Polish Jews make a living? Where did they live? What was the kehillah?

Using the selection "Why the Jews?" in Handout A-3, break into three groups. Each group will be assigned one of the medieval libels.

- ❖ Describe the libel
- ❖ Explain its source
- ❖ Predict its impact on European Jewry
- ❖ Suggest ways that the libel could be logically refuted

The entire class will examine the section entitled "Christian Roots of the Holocaust." What connections do the authors make between:

- ❖ Nazism and Christianity?
- ❖ Christian anti-Semitism and the Holocaust?
- ❖ Nazism anti-Semitism and Christian anti-Semitism?

Using Vatican's II's Declaration on Christian-Jewish relations, discuss the following questions:

- ❖ How does this statement deal with the charge of deicide?
- ❖ How does the statement deal with the charge of collective guilt?
- ❖ Why might the church be opposed to actions and statements against the Jewish people?

Using "Martin Luther and the Jews," prepared by Raul Hilberg, which was expressed by Luther after the Jews refused to convert to Lutheranism, respond to the following:

- ❖ Why did Martin Luther view the Jews as a threat to Christians?
- ❖ Describe how Martin Luther characterized Jews in his writings.

The Lutheran Synod today has repudiated Luther's anti-Semitic statements.

**As homework, read "the Interacting Causes of Anti-Semitism," by Milton Yinger.**

Understand: the term "Christian Anti-Semitism" does not mean that ALL Christians were or are anti-Semitic or anti-Jewish. The term refers to specific Church policies which were discriminatory and encouraged intolerance of Jews.